

Choose three poems from the pre 1914 selection and compare the ways in which the poets use FORM, CONTENT and LANGUAGE. In your conclusion say which of the poems you find most interesting and why.

The three poems which I am writing about are called “Sonnet 18”, “La Belle Dame Sans Merci” and “To His Coy Mistress”. “Sonnet 18” is written by William Shakespeare (1564-1616). “La Belle Dame Sans Merci” is written by John Keats (1795-1821). “To His Coy Mistress” is written by Andrew Marvell (1621-1678). All of these three poems have a certain thing in common. This certain thing is that all three poems have parts about LOVE, DEATH and IMMORTALITY.

“Sonnet 18” is a sonnet. A sonnet usually has fourteen lines with an ABAB rhyme scheme and ends with a rhyming couplet. “La Belle Dame Sans Merci” is a ballad. A ballad usually has four lines in each stanza with an ABCB rhyme scheme. “To His Coy Mistress” is a dramatic monologue and so doesn’t have a certain amount of lines. “To His Coy Mistress” has an AABB rhyme scheme. There are two main differences between all of these three poems and all that they are is the rhyme schemes and the amount of lines or stanzas in each line.

“La Belle Dame Sans Merci is French for a woman without pity, kindness and merci. In “To His Coy Mistress” the word “Coy” means shy. All of the poems have a different rhyme scheme but “Sonnet 18” has a rhyming couplet to end the poem off.

In “La Belle Dame Sans Merci” there are parts about love, death and immortality. For love there is a quote that says “I met a lady in the meads, full beautiful a feary’s child, her hair was long, her foot was light and her eyes were wild.” This quote shows us that he loves her from the moment he saw her. Also he describes her hair, her foot and her eyes. For death there is a quote that says “I saw pale kings and princes too, pale warriors, death-pale were they all. They cried “La Belle Dame Sans Merci”, hath thee in thrall.” Also it says “I saw their stav’d lips in the gloam, with horrid warning gaped wide, and I awoke and found me here, on this cold hills side.” This is telling the reader that he is having a nightmare and that he is trapped. As well as that it says that he is pale and sees other pale involving kings, princes and warriors.

For immortality it says “A feary’s child” this shows that he is immortal because he has a fairy looking after him. Also it says “I made a garland for her head.” This shows us that it is spring but when he wakes up it is winter. “A cold hills side.” This shows that he has grown old but she is still young.

In “Sonnet 18” there quote about love that describes her to a summer’s day. “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day? Thou art more lovely and more temperate. Rough winds do share the darling buds of May, and summer’s lease hath all too short a date. For death there is a quote which means that death shall wonder away from her. “Nor shall death brag thou wonderest in his shade” Immortality in this poem is very strongly used. For example “But thy eternal

summer shall not fade, nor lose possessions of that fair owest.” This is telling the reader that the women he is talking about will live forever and will not fade.

In “To His Coy Mistress” there is a love quote such as “A hundred years should go to praise, two hundred to adore each breast, but thirty thousand to the rest, an age at least to every part, and the last age should go to your heart.” This is showing me that he wants to spend a certain amount of time for each part of her body. For death there is a quote that says “But at my back I always hear time’s winged chariot hurrying near, and yonder all before us lie deserts of vast eternity.” This is showing us death but very bleakly because he doesn’t use the word death but he explains it in more detail without saying the word. In “To His Coy Mistress” the man in the poem doesn’t believe in life after death. For example it says “The graves a fine private place, but none I think do there embrace.” This means although it is private, there is nobody to hug or cuddle with.

The poem I like the most would be “Sonnet 18”, this is because there is a great love scene at the beginning and I feel like it means very much to the person who he is writing to. I have come to this conclusion by knowing that there is more love in the poem than there is death and immortality. I personally like the first line because of the way he describes her. “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day? Summer’s day is the words that sum her up as beautiful. This comes down on the reader as very hard because it is showing the reader to appreciate people because they are what they are and you should always treat them as best as you can and compliment them on everything even if their wrong, by this I mean choose a good thing to say. This poem enlightens hearts for everyone who reads it. I wouldn’t hesitate to read this poem to anyone if I was asked because it is so good that it would make me feel good.

In all three poems I have three favourite quotes from each one. From “Sonnet 18” they are “Thou art more lovely and more temperate”, “Sometimes too hot the eye of Heaven shines” and “By thy eternal summer shall not fade.”

In “To His Coy Mistress” my favourite three are; “The last age should show your heart”, “The beauty shall no more be found”, and “Through the iron gates of life.”

In “La Belle Dame Sans Merci” my favourite three are; “And her eyes were wild”, “She looked at me as she did love” and “I love thee true.”

I like all of these quotes because they show love over everything else, which I think is good. These nine quotes are what make the three poems interesting.

Written by Josh Garcia